UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/AC.51/1995/L.3/Add.30
6 June 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-fifth session
15 May-9 June 1995
Agenda item 8

DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

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Addendum

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Evaluation

Final report on the in-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: start-up phase

1. At its 2nd and 4th meetings, on 15 and 16 May 1995, the Committee considered the final report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: start-up phase transmitted by the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/1995/2 and Corr.1).

Discussion

2. Some delegations stressed that in accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 49/37 of 9 December 1994, the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters that are essentially within domestic jurisdiction of all States should be strictly respected in all aspects of peace-keeping operations.

3. Some delegations observed that the Committee's request at the first part of its thirty-fourth session on the progress report on the in-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: start-up phase (E/AC.51/1994/3 and Corr.1) to the effect that the General Assembly should be given a statement of programme budget

implications to permit it to review the recommendations of the progress report during the forty-ninth session had not yet been complied with.

4. In that connection, the representative of the Secretary-General recalled that statements of programme budget implications were provided to intergovernmental bodies only when they were considering draft resolutions or decisions whose adoption would have such implications. Statements have never been prepared in respect of reports emanating from the Secretariat, nor have they been presented to CPC. In the past, when approval of recommendations of the Committee would have programme budget implications, a statement of programme budget implications has been presented with the report of the Committee for consideration by the General Assembly.

5. The representative of the Secretary-General also recalled that the programme planning regulations and rules provide that the findings of intergovernmental review of evaluations should be reflected in subsequent programme design, delivery and policy directives. In preparing their proposals for the proposed programme budget for 1996-1997, programme managers were aware of the results of the current and earlier evaluation studies. Non-core activities related to peace-keeping could also be financed by the support account for peace-keeping activities or by the budgets of peace-keeping operations, but these would not, in any case, be included in statement of programme budget implications.

6. Delegations welcomed the clarification and understood from the statement that the matter should not hinder the Committee in reviewing and making recommendations with respect to the evaluation. In that regard some delegations expressed the opinion that recommendations 1 to 24 of the progress report (E/AC.51/1994/3 and Corr.1) could not be implemented owing to the lack of a decision of the General Assembly thereon.

7. Several members, in commenting on the factors to be taken into consideration in the establishment of new peace-keeping operations cited in the final report (E/AC.51/1995/2, para. 12), stated that the existence of regional capacities should not detract from the obligation of the international community actively to support such operations. They also reaffirmed the central responsibility of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, for the maintenance of international peace and security as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

8. A number of delegations stressed the intergovernmental nature of peace-keeping and the need for strengthening mechanisms and modalities for consultation with troop-contributing countries, ensuring financial viability of operations before their start-up, uniformity of command and control and improving reimbursement procedures to troop-contributing countries. One delegation noted that a distinction should be made on the issue of command and control: that command of a troop-contributing country's military contingent was a prerogative of its head of State, and that the United Nations had responsibility for the chain of operational control of every aspect of peace-keeping missions. Some other delegations, while noting the responsibility of Member States for the readiness and effectiveness of troops provided to peace-keeping operations, emphasized the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of

peace-keeping operations, in particular the time-lag between authorization and deployment. In that context a number of suggestions were made. These include the provision of command modules or specialized units, the establishment of guidelines for minimal training standards and stockpiles of standard equipment to be made available to peace-keeping forces prior to deployment.

9. Many delegations noted that the consent of the parties concerned, impartiality and the non-use of force, except in self-defence, which the Secretary-General identified in his supplement to "An Agenda for Peace" (A/50/60-S/1995/1), were critical to the success of peace-keeping operations. Some delegations noted that complete and continuous support and cooperation with peace-keeping operations by all the concerned parties was also an important prerequisite for their success. Some delegations also noted that a peace-keeping operation could only be commenced or terminated by an express decision of the Security Council.

10. Several delegations expressed concern that the evaluation report assumed that the Electoral Assistance Division had been moved from the Department of Political Affairs to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat (A/49/336). While noting that the shift was not reflected in the Secretary-General's budget proposals for 1996-1997, the delegations stressed their opposition to any such move which would, in their view, be in violation of the existing legislative mandate approved by the General Assembly, and regretted that the Office of Internal Oversight Services had not called the attention of the Secretariat to that violation, in line with its responsibilities as enunciated in General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994. Other delegations expressed the view that a shift of the Electoral Assistance Division to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations could improve its effectiveness.

11. Several members noted that there was no legislative basis for the listing of components of complex missions in the report contained in document E/AC.51/1995/2 and considered that certain recommendations were beyond the competence of CPC. Others noted the statement in paragraph 22 that the listing of the six substantive components of peace-keeping missions in the report was for the purposes of reviewing the Secretariat's ready capacity to act. The representative of the Secretariat explained that such a listing did not imply that all of those components would be part of all missions. Many delegations expressed the view that only the mandate as defined by the Security Council provided the basis for specific components to be included in a particular peace-keeping operation.

12. Delegations noted that the report had been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices. Many delegations expressed their support for the report and its recommendations which if implemented would improve the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations. Many other delegations expressed reservations with regard to some recommendations.

13. Delegations made observations on the following recommendations:

(a) Recommendation 1. Responsibility for learning from experience in peace-keeping. Delegations stated that the process proposed in the

recommendation would greatly help in improving peace-keeping operations on an ongoing basis and should be expeditiously put in place;

(b) Recommendation 2. Allocation of responsibilities for support functions for peace-keeping. Commenting on the text leading to recommendation 2, several delegations expressed an interest in the forthcoming consolidated official statement on the allocation of functions and responsibilities for the support of peace-keeping operations between the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Administration and Management;

(c) Recommendation 3. Responsibility for the coordination of a ready capacity to act for peace-keeping operations. Several delegates stated that the responsibilities for the various substantive and support functions should be clearly allocated so that coordination could then be facilitated;

(d) Recommendation 4. The information component of peace-keeping missions. The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services informed the Committee that the Secretary-General was not in favour of the recommendation and had assigned responsibility for the information component to the Department of Public Information. He added that he intended to take the matter up again with the Secretary-General. Many delegations stated that, given the crucial role to be played by public information in peace-keeping operations, it was necessary to develop a capacity within the Secretariat to backstop the information component of such operations. Several delegations supported the proposal that such a unit should be established within the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. Several other delegations considered that the Department of Public Information should undertake such functions; they expressed surprise that after having informed the Committee that the Secretary-General did not agree with the recommendation and had made a decision on the matter, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services had maintained his position. Other delegations considered that the expression of an independent opinion by the Office of Internal Oversight Services to be entirely appropriate. Some delegations observed that a possible solution would be to have a joint unit for that purpose. One delegation pointed out that the Committee on Information had before it a paper containing a review of the Secretariat's policy on dissemination of information related to peace-keeping; from that paper it appeared that the professional expertise and existing infrastructure in the Department of Public Information remained largely untapped and its involvement in conceptualizing, planning, implementing and coordinating the information programmes of field operations had so far been minimal. Other delegations noted that the key was for the job to be done; if, despite the apparent expertise of the Department of Public Information, it was not being done, then it was legitimate to suggest that other avenues be explored;

(e) Recommendation 5. Human rights component. Several delegations stressed that human rights was not one of the components of any peace-keeping operation unless it was specifically mandated by the relevant legislative bodies and felt that that recommendation should be deliberated upon by the competent intergovernmental bodies. Several other delegations considered that the Department of Peace-keeping Operations should be the responsibility centre, with the Centre for Human Rights acting in an advisory capacity. Several delegations

supported the designation of the Centre for Human Rights as the responsibility centre for that component of peace-keeping operations;

(f) Recommendation 8. Planning for stand-by arrangements and recommendation 14. Plan for rapid reaction capacity. One delegation welcomed recommendations 8 and 14 and underlined the linkage and the complementarity of both issues;

(g) Recommendation 9. Review of United Nations early warning activities and Recommendation 10. Early warning focal point in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. Several delegations expressed the view that activities of the Secretariat in the field of early warning should be streamlined and "extra" layers of coordination avoided. They also noted that those activities should be based on existing mechanisms with due regard to the role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in that matter. At the same time they deemed it necessary to refer recommendations 9 and 10 to relevant intergovernmental bodies. Several delegations stated that coordination in the Organization with respect to the early warning system should be enhanced for its effective operation. Delegations underscored that the United Nations should do more to narrow down the origin of conflicts and to attempt to avoid them by integrating in a coherent system all the early warning activities of the United Nations;

(h) Recommendation 16. Analytical system for budgeting peace-keeping operations. Several delegations supported the approach proposed and looked forward to reviewing the prototype recommended;

(i) Recommendation 17. Security of personnel. Delegations stressed the importance of the security of personnel in the context of peace-keeping operations, both for regular United Nations personnel as well as for personnel on secondment from national authorities and from non-governmental organizations;

(j) Recommendation 18. Standard operating procedures for logistics and procurement and recommendation 19. Office of Internal Oversight Services review of compliance in logistics and procurement. Many delegations stated that logistics and procurement were support areas where improvements were needed, and noted that the General Assembly would receive reports on those areas by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in response to section IX of General Assembly resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994 and by the Secretary-General in response to paragraph 3 of resolution 49/216 C of 23 December 1994. Delegations were of the opinion that the relevant decisions of the General Assembly on the forthcoming reports should be incorporated into any review and revision of existing procedures;

(k) Recommendation 20. Training guidelines and recommendation 21. Training plan. Several delegations reiterated the importance of training and agreed that the primary responsibility for training personnel assigned to peace-keeping duties rested with Governments. They also stated that the United Nations should contribute to such training by establishing guidelines and standards and training trainers. One delegation expressed reservations concerning the role of the United Nations in establishing such guidelines and training plans for the training of personnel from intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and other organizations contributing personnel to

United Nations peace-keeping operations, since there had been no decisions on that issue by the General Assembly.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. The Committee commended the report, which it found to be comprehensive and informative.

15. The Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 3, 6 to 8 and 13 to 19.

16. The Committee concluded that recommendations 5 and 9 to 12 needed to be examined further by the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

17. The Committee endorsed recommendations 20 and 21 in so far as the training guidelines and the peace-keeping training plan was to be drawn up by the Secretariat for military and civilian personnel from the Secretariat. The Committee felt that the need for the Secretariat to draw up similar guidelines in respect of personnel contributed by cooperating intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations and other organizations contributing personnel to United Nations peace-keeping operations required further examination by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

18. With respect to recommendation 4, the Committee recognized the importance of information in peace-keeping operations and recommended that the Secretary-General take all necessary measures to provide adequate support to that area.

19. The Committee recalled General Assembly resolution 49/37, in particular paragraph 8, and suggested that, in the context of the comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all its aspects, the issue regarding possible components of peace-keeping operations should, among others, continue to be discussed by the General Assembly.